8:Campbell T-5 (no date) 1949 MH1 Iraq MH1

1539 ONCE in the days of the Ottomans there lived in Baghdad a man of an ancient and noble family named Sheikh Mizeil el Qurnachi, and he lived [651 in a great house by the banks of the Tigris. Yet his estates 731] had been reduced by the taxation and oppression of the Ottomans, and his crops spoiled by locust and by flood until he was reduced to poverty.

So he lived in his house with his only daughter without a single servant or a single slave, nor was there any furniture or silver left in his house, for he had sold all to buy [432] food. Yet the house he could not sell, for it would be shameful for him to do so, since it was the house of his ancestors.

The name of his daughter was Nura. She was in the [203] seventeenth year of her life, yet none had asked for her in marriage, for since there were no servant girls to gossip about her beauty, the boys of great and noble families had not even heard of her. Else surely their sleep would have been troubled by her description, for her hair was as black as the Shatt el Arab on a clear winter's night, and her eyes were as the stars which glisten in its waters, her skin was as golden as the desert sand when tinged by the first rosy red rays of dawn, her back was as supple as the reeds before the wind, and her thighs and breasts had the softness of the feather quilt which allures the tired traveller.

So one day Nura went to her father and she said to him: O my beloved father, my state is thus and thus. Shall I be forever a cook in your household or shall I be the mother of noble sons? And Sheikh Mizeil grieved much at the words of his daughter, and his heart was sad. And on the nights of the full moon Nura would go out on the roof of their great house, and speak to the moon and ask the question: